



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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SOME CHRISTMAS GAMES.

INDOOR GAMES.

Characters is a game which any number of people may play. One or more of the players go out of the room while the others decide upon the name of some well-known personage, and each takes one letter of the name—(they must, of course, follow in sequence). This gives the initial letter of the character to be described.

The players outside are then called in, and are told at whom the word begins. They listen to the account, and if unable to decide upon the name of the person described (the first letter of which will give the initial letter of the whole) they proceed to the second player, or third, and make a note of the names to whom the description might apply.

Suppose the word decided upon to be Wordsworth. The first player, whose letter is W, describes—say, H. Walpole; the second, Orpheus; third, Raphael; fourth, Dora (David Copperfield); fifth, Skimpole; sixth, Wolfe; seventh, Orlando; eighth, Romeo; ninth, Theseus; tenth, Handel. If the word is not then found out, the whole "Wordsworth" may be described.

Cat and Mouse.—This can only be played with a large number of children—about ten. Eight chairs will be taken, and arranged in two rows, facing each other, a child being seated on each chair. There will be two children left out—one is the cat, and one is the mouse. They are both blind-folded; both take off their shoes; then the mouse is started. She has to try and keep away from the cat. There must be perfect silence all the time, so that the cat and mouse may hear where each other are. When the mouse is caught, the handkerchiefs are taken off, and two more take their place.

Mouchoir.—The party sit round in a ring, and one stands in the middle and tries to catch a handkerchief thrown from one to the other in the ring. The person at which the handkerchief is caught then stands up in the middle and takes the place of the first catcher.

It.—The party sit in a ring, and one goes out of the room. The people inside then decide each to describe the person who sits at their left hand. Suppose a gentleman sits next to a lady, and then another gentleman, the first gentleman describes the lady at his left and the lady describes the gentleman at her left. The person outside is then called in and is told that some person has been decided on. He then proceeds to question all round and generally succeeds in getting rather mystified. One way which helps

him rather is to ask the same question all round. He has to find out who is decided upon.

A New idea, instead of a Bran-pie or Christmas Tree, which the writer saw lately in an old country-house, was as follows:

On Christmas Eve all the household was assembled in the large hall, part of which was curtained off. When the curtain rose, Macbeth's three witches were seen stirring a huge cauldron and muttering their incantations. Suddenly Father Christmas, in snowy beard and holly-crowned, appeared on the scene and asked the witches what they mean by desecrating his festival. With a wave of his staff, he bid them disappear, and called on his good fairy to appear and distribute the gifts which Santa Claus had sent. The youngest child of the house, dressed as a little fairy and with shiny wings, tripped in. Coloured lights were thrown over the scene, and the fairy, dipping her hand into the cauldron, brought out (helped by Father Christmas) the presents for all.

Judge and Jury.—The children form two lines, sitting opposite one another. One sits at the top of the rows to take the place of judge. He must ask questions, and the one sitting opposite to the one asked must answer. If A. sits opposite B., and the judge asks B. a question, A. must answer, without using the words Yes, No, Nay, Black, White, or Grey. If any of these words are used, or the wrong one answers, or an answer is not given before the judge counts 10 (not too fast), the one who is at fault must take the place of the judge.

Clumps.—The party divides into two "clumps." One individual is chosen from each, and the two thus chosen retire from the room. Then the clumps cogitate together and fix on some object which the two outsiders have to guess, as, for instance, "The beak of the cock on the church spire." When the object is agreed upon, the two outsiders are recalled, and one goes to each clump. They, as rapidly as possible, question their respective clumps (asking a question of each individual in turn, to which the only answer allowed is "Yes," or "No"). If the questions are skilfully put, it will not be long before one of the interlocutors has guessed the object given, and the other has then to join the successful "clump."

OUTDOOR GAMES.

String-tang.—One child starts and runs after any one till he or she is caught. Then they join hands and catch a third. Then the three together catch a fourth, and so on till all are caught. The last one caught starts afresh. If the string is broken, all must go to one end of the ground and start again, those caught still keeping hands. If anyone is touched while the string is broken he is not caught.

Oliver Cromwell came over to England with William the Conqueror. He had not been in England long before he was accused of the murder of his nephews in the Tower. He was tried and found guilty, and had his choice of two punishments, either to be drowned in a butt of Malmsey wine, or to shoot an apple off the head of his wife, Joan of Arc. He chose the latter; and the apple, falling to the ground, discovered the law of gravitation.

The Story of Columbus.—The King of Spain sent for Columbus, and said: "Columbus, can you discover America?" "Yes," said Columbus, "I think I can if you give me some ships." The king did so, and Columbus set sail in the direction in which he thought America ought to lie. When they had been at sea some time, the sailors wanted to go home, but Columbus said, "Come on, we'll soon find land." Soon they did, and when they got near, they saw the black men standing on the beach with their chief. When they landed, Columbus said: "I suppose you're the niggers." "Yes," answered the chief, "and I suppose you're Columbus." "Right you are!" said Columbus. Then said the chief, turning to his companions, "There's no help for it, we are discovered at last."

BOOKS.

"En hoexkens ende boexkens."

OUR readers should see the *Girl's Own Paper* for November and the four months following. Under the title of "A New Departure in Education," an anonymous writer sets forth education on "our" lines from an independent standpoint. It is gratifying that the writer of so able a paper should feel so strongly the importance of P.N.E.U. work, and should recognise the fitness of the various schemes, "House of Education," "Parents' Review School," &c., by which we are endeavouring to bring about a reform in the aims and methods of education. The writer we have referred to gives physiological reasons, most clearly and tellingly put and illustrated by diagrams, for the truth, as we hold it, and it is for the sake of this admirable instruction about "brains" that we are anxious that our readers should study these papers. We wonder will they think that they recognise the masterly touch of the writer?

Mr. Arnold sends us four charming volumes for review belonging to the *Children's Favourite Series*. These little books (2s. each) are said to be beautifully illustrated, and so they are, notably "The Story of a Donkey," in *My Story-Book of Animals*. And what a charming donkey he is! A Spanish donkey, belonging to a Spanish milkman, who carried out milk for his sick master, all on his own account, knocking at closed doors "just like a Christian." All the stories of animals are very engaging.

Rhymes for You and Me is another treasure-trove for the babies. Good, big print, pretty pictures, and delightful rhymes, young enough for the little folk. We all know Blake's "Little lamb, who made thee?" But we cannot always give the children *poetry*, because not every poet has the gift to take the measure of a child's mind. So let us be thankful for attractive rhymes. Miss Alcott's "Song from the Tub" will be a favourite, and so will "When I am a man," by an anonymous author. Josephine Pollard's "I-No and U-No," is capital.

My Book of Fables, chosen chiefly from the famous old fables of Æsop and others, dear to children of all ages, is a little book parents will be glad to see. The fables are slightly written down to children of nursery age, the pictures are amusing, and the type good. All the old fables, "The Woodman and the Trees," "The Farmer and the Stork," "The Dog in the Manger," "The Fox and the Crow," "The Fir-tree and the Bramble," "The Wolves and the Sheep," and many more are to be found here.

The gem of the series is, perhaps, *Deeds of Gold*. The frontispiece is "The Lady with the Lamp," the statue of Florence Nightingale. The first chapter strikes the keynote, "What is a golden deed? It is a deed done for the good of others—a deed that shows that we think more of others than we do of ourselves." What is a golden deed? It is an act of mercy,